FISH & WILDLIFE COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET

Meeting Date: May 22, 2014

Agenda Item: Voluntary Wolf Conservation Stamp – Proposed

Division: Wildlife Action Needed: Proposed

Time Needed on Agenda for this Presentation: 20 minutes

Background

Wolf management in Montana currently includes regulated take by hunters and trappers. 87-1-623, MCA directs that all wolf license revenue be deposited in a wolf management account, and that funding in that account must be used equally for collaring and control. Other stakeholders interested in contributing to wolf management but not wanting to harvest wolves or have their funds directed at only collaring or control have expressed interest in similarly contributing. While purchasing a conservation license and/or wolf license is currently available to any person, many do not believe those purchase options appropriately reflect a non-consumptive perspective. In response, this proposal would seek to establish Commission policy directing the department to conduct rulemaking to define a voluntary wolf conservation stamp or decal for any person wanting to financially contribute to wolf management and to clarify how those donated dollars would be allocated to first address administrative costs associated with the stamp/decal then to equally assist:

grants awarded through the livestock loss reduction program; wolf monitoring, habitat, research, and education/outreach and; FWP enforcement staff or efforts in occupied wolf habitat.

Public Involvement Process & Results

Public comment opportunity on this Commission direction would be available in person or via teleconference from FWP regional offices at the May 22 meeting. Adopting this policy direction on May 22 would initiate efforts by the department to conduct rulemaking. That process would include first an initial and then a final presentation of proposed rules to the Commission with associated opportunity for public review and comment.

Alternatives and Analysis

Alternatives include no action or Commission policy directing the department to conduct rulemaking. No policy action would maintain existing purchase options. An additional wolf conservation stamp/decal would not preclude purchase of existing licenses.

Agency Recommendation & Rationale

While it is impossible to predict participation levels, this stamp would reflect expressed public interest for a new mechanism to contribute to wolf management.

Proposed Motion

I move the Commission approve for public comment the proposed policy that would direct the department to conduct rulemaking to define a voluntary wolf conservation stamp or decal and how donated funds from that stamp or decal would be allocated to specific wolf conservation efforts.